

Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 041810 TOSEC 040167

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S E C R E T STATE 041810 TOSEC 040167

NODIS
FOR SECRETARY FROM ATHERTON

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SS, MO, AG

SUBJ: ACTION MEMORANDUM: SPANISH SAHARA -
SUGGESTED TALKING POINTS FOR ATHERTON USE WITH BOUMEDIENE
AND HASSAN (S/S NO. 7603653)

1. FOLLOWING FOR YOUR APPROVAL ARE TALKING POINTS I WOULD
USE WITH BOUMEDIENE AND HASSAN DURING MY FORTHCOMING TRIP
TO ALGERIA AND MOROCCO.

2. FOR BOUMEDIENE: BEGIN TEXT:

-- WHEN SECRETARY KISSINGER WAS INFORMED ABOUT RACHID
ZEGHAR'S CONVERSATIONS WITH UNDER SECRETARY ROBINSON AND
MYSELF, HE ASKED ME TO COME TO ALGIERS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE
ON HIS BEHALF TO DISCUSS WITH YOU DIRECTLY YOUR CONCERNS
ABOUT THE SAHARA QUESTION.

-- SECRETARY KISSINGER WANTS YOU TO KNOW THAT HE WOULD
VERY MUCH REGRET IT IF THIS ISSUE ADVERSELY AFFECTED U.S.-
ALGERIAN RELATIONS. WHETHER THINGS TAKE THIS COURSE,
SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 041810 TOSEC 040167

HOWEVER, DOES NOT DEPEND ENTIRELY OR EVEN MAINLY ON THE
U.S.

-- I WOULD LIKE TO EXPLAIN TO YOU QUITE FRANKLY ABOUT

HOW WE SEE THE SAHARA SITUATION AND OUR RELATION TO IT. WE HAVE SOUGHT TO AVOID DIRECT INVOLVEMENT IN IT, BUT WE HAVE ALWAYS RECOGNIZED THAT IT CONTAINED THE POTENTIAL FOR TROUBLE BOTH WITHIN THE REGION AND FOR OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH OUR FRIENDS IN THE REGION.

-- AWARE OF THE DANGERS THAT COULD BE CAUSED BY A CONFRONTATION, THE U.S. STRONGLY URGED KING HASSAN NOT TO UNDERTAKE HIS GREEN MARCH INTO THE SAHARA. WE SUPPORTED ALL OF THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL DECISIONS CALLING FOR THE MARCHERS TO BE WITHDRAWN.

-- THE U.S. ALSO PLAYED NO ROLE WHATSOEVER IN THE NEGOTIATION OF THE NOVEMBER 14 TRIPARTITE AGREEMENT. SPAIN SIGNED THIS AGREEMENT WITH MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA FOR ITS OWN REASONS. ASSERTIONS THAT SPAIN ACTED UNDER U.S. PRESSURE ARE TOTALLY WITHOUT BASIS IN FACT. WE HAD ALWAYS URGED A NEGOTIATED SOLUTION, WITHOUT HOWEVER TAKING A POSITION ON WHAT THE NATURE OF THAT SOLUTION SHOULD BE. WE WERE NOT CONSULTED ABOUT THE TRIPARTITE AGREEMENT AND, IN FACT, WERE UNAWARE OF ITS CONTENTS UNTIL AFTER IT WAS CONCLUDED. ANY PRESSURE SPAIN FELT CAME FROM THE MOROCCAN MARCH AND OUR INABILITY TO PERSUADE THE MOROCCANS NOT TO UNDERTAKE IT.

-- WITH THE SITUATION THAT FACED ALL THE STATES CONCERNED IN THE LIGHT OF SPAIN'S DECISION TO WITHDRAW FROM THE SAHARA, IT NEVERTHELESS SEEMED TO US THAT THE TRIPARTITE AGREEMENT WAS LESS POTENTIALLY DAMAGING THAN OTHER POSSIBLE COURSES. IT WAS ONE OF THOSE SITUATIONS WITH NO IDEAL SOLUTION. WE DID BELIEVE, AS OUR UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY VOTE SHOWED, THAT THERE SHOULD BE AN EFFORT TO LEARN THE WISHES OF THE PEOPLE OF THE SAHARA, AND WE HAVE INDICATED AS MUCH TO KING HASSAN.

-- WE RECOGNIZE THAT A SITUATION NOW EXISTS IN WHICH KING HASSAN IS DEEPLY COMMITTED TO HIS SAHARA POLICY. MOROCCAN PRESENCE IN THE SAHARA IS A REALITY THAT COULD BE
SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 041810 TOSEC 040167

REVERSED, IF AT ALL, ONLY THROUGH OPEN AND LARGE-SCALE WARFARE, A DEVELOPMENT THAT COULD ONLY HAVE THE MOST TRAGIC CONSEQUENCES FOR THE COUNTRIES DIRECTLY CONCERNED AND FOR THE ARAB WORLD GENERALLY. AMONG THE CONSEQUENCES COULD BE THE INTERNATIONALIZATION OF THE QUESTION, WITH ALL THE RISKS THAT THAT ENTAILS.

-- WE HAVE THEREFORE FOLLOWED WITH INTEREST AND HOPE THE EFFORTS OF REGIONAL LEADERS AND THE UN SECRETARY GENERAL TO FIND A SOLUTION. THE RESULTS SO FAR HAVE BEEN DISCOURAGING BUT WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE STRONGLY THAT THE BEST INTERESTS OF ALL REQUIRE THAT SOME WAY BE FOUND TO THIS END.

-- WITH THIS IN MIND I TALKED AT LENGTH WITH KING HASSAN.
(DEPENDING ON THE RESULTS OF THE RABAT STOP, I WOULD
SUGGEST SOME POSSIBLE OPENING, MAKING CLEAR I WAS
NOT UNDERTAKING A MEDIATORY ROLE, OR SIMPLY EMPHASIZE THE
EFFORTS I HAD MADE TO FIND ONE.)

-- I WANT TO DISCUSS WITH YOU, IN THE SAME FRANKNESS,
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE U.S. AND MOROCCO. IT IS OF
LONG STANDING AND IS NOT RELATED TO THE SAHARA ISSUE. IT
HAS NEVER BEEN INTENDED AS REFLECTING AN UNFRIENDLY
ATTITUDE TOWARD ALGERIA, NOR IS IT DESIGNED TO DIVERT
ALGERIA FROM OTHER CONCERNS. THE SECRETARY ASKED ME TO
EMPHASIZE THIS LATTER POINT IN PARTICULAR BECAUSE
MR. ZEGHAR INDICATED YOU HAVE MISGIVINGS ABOUT OUR
INTENTIONS IN THIS RESPECT. SECRETARY KISSINGER WANTS
YOU TO KNOW THAT HE VALUES HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH YOU
HIGHLY, AND MUCH APPRECIATES YOUR UNDERSTANDING ATTITUDE
TOWARD HIS EFFORTS FOR AN ARAB-ISRAELI SETTLEMENT. HE
HOPES THAT OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS WILL BE ABLE TO CONTINUE
TO CONSULT TOGETHER ON THIS PROBLEM IN A COOPERATIVE
SPIRIT.

-- ON THE MATTER OF OUR ARMS SUPPLIES FOR MOROCCO, WE
FEEL THAT ALGERIA HAS CAUSE NEITHER FOR CONCERN NOR
COMPLAINT. THE U.S. HAS NO DESIRE AND NO INTENTION TO
ENCOURAGE MILITARY CONFRONTATION IN THE REGION. OUR
MILITARY ASSISTANCE WILL NOT CHANGE THE MILITARY BALANCE
SECRET

PAGE 04 STATE 041810 TOSEC 040167

IN MOROCCO'S FAVOR, EVEN ASSUMING ALGERIA WERE ITSELF TO
RECEIVE NO FURTHER STRENGTHENING. WE KNOW, MOREOVER,
THAT ALGERIA HAS BEEN RECEIVING VERY SUBSTANTIAL QUANTITIES
OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT. IN THE FACE OF THIS SITUATION,
THE BASIS OF ALGERIA'S CONCERN ABOUT OUR MODEST, ON-GOING
PROGRAM OF SUPPLY TO MOROCCO IS NOT CLEAR TO US. I MUST
BE FRANK AND SAY THAT THIS PROGRAM WILL CONTINUE, BUT
MANY REPORTS HAVE GREATLY EXAGGERATED ITS SIZE.

-- ONE OF OUR CONCERNS IN THE SITUATION IS THAT IF
ALGERIA SHOULD PURSUE AND INTENSIFY ITS EFFORTS TO ALTER
THE COURSE OF EVENTS IN THE SAHARA, AND PARTICULARLY IF
THE CONFLICT WERE INTERNATIONALIZED IN ANY WAY, OUR OWN
INVOLVEMENT MIGHT NECESSARILY BE INCREASED BEYOND WHAT
WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE. WE WOULD BE DISTRESSED IN
PARTICULAR AT THE DAMAGE SUCH A DEVELOPMENT WOULD CAUSE TO
THE U.S.-ALGERIAN RELATIONSHIP, WHICH WE VALUE AND WHICH
WE CONSIDER TO BE OF MUTUAL BENEFIT.

-- WE HAVE BEEN PARTICULARLY GRATIFIED BY THE DEVELOP-
MENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY BETWEEN OUR
TWO COUNTRIES, AND FEAR THAT EXACERBATION OF THE SAHARA

SITUATION WOULD ALMOST INEVITABLY AFFECT THE CLIMATE FOR
TRADE AND COOPERATION.

END TEXT.

3. FOR HASSAN: BEGIN TEXT:

TALKING POINTS - KING HASSAN

-- IT IS VERY GRACIOUS OF YOUR MAJESTY TO GRANT ME THIS
AUDIENCE. I RECALL WITH GREAT PLEASURE OUR CONVERSATION
OF LAST OCTOBER AND HAVE BEEN LOOKING FORWARD TO THIS
MEETING.

-- SECRETARY KISSINGER ASKED ME TO UNDERTAKE THIS MISSION
BECAUSE OF HIS DEEPENING CONCERN ABOUT THE SAHARAN
SITUATION. ALTHOUGH FOR THE MOMENT ARMED CONFLICTS APPEAR
TO HAVE SUBSIDED, THE RESULTS OF VARIOUS EFFORTS TO
MEDIATE THE DISPUTE HAVE SO FAR BEEN DISAPPOINTING. WE
SECRET

PAGE 05 STATE 041810 TOSEC 040167

FEAR THAT IF ALGERIA AND MOROCCO FAIL TO RECONCILE THEIR
DIFFERENCES, THIS WILL CREATE REGIONAL INSTABILITY WHICH
IN TURN COULD BE EXPLOITED BY THE SOVIETS, CUBANS, OR
OTHER OUTSIDE ELEMENTS TO SERVE THEIR OWN INTERESTS.

-- I WANT TO MAKE IT CLEAR FROM THE BEGINNING THAT I HAVE
NOT COME HERE IN THE ROLE OF MEDIATOR. THE U.S. HAS NO
INTENTION OF BECOMING INVOLVED IN THE SUBSTANCE OF ANY
NEGOTIATIONS AMONG THE CONCERNED AND INTERESTED PARTIES.
WE BELIEVE THIS PROBLEM SHOULD BE SETTLED ON A REGIONAL
BASIS OR WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE UN, AND WE SHALL
CONTINUE TO LEND OUR SUPPORT TO SUCH EFFORTS.

-- AS YOU KNOW, AFTER MOROCCO I WILL PROCEED TO ALGIERS
WHERE I EXPECT TO TALK WITH PRESIDENT BOUMEDIENE. THE
ALGERIANS, IN ALGIERS AND WASHINGTON, HAVE CONVEYED TO US
(AS THEY HAVE TO MANY OTHER COUNTRIES AND TO UN SECRETARY
GENERAL WALDHEIM) THEIR WELL-KNOWN POSITION THAT SELF-
DETERMINATION THROUGH SOME KIND OF REFERENDUM IS THE
ONLY ACCEPTABLE SOLUTION IN THE SAHARA. THEY UNDER-
STANDABLY PERCEIVE OUR POLICY AS "PRO-MOROCCAN" AND HAVE
INDICATED THAT IT COULD LEAD TO A SERIOUS DETERIORATION
IN U.S.-ALGERIAN RELATIONS. IN MY TALK WITH BOUMEDIENE,
I INTEND TO EXPLAIN THE RATIONALE FOR THE POLICY WE HAVE
FOLLOWED AND TO SEEK A BETTER UNDERSTANDING BY THE
ALGERIANS OF OUR POSITION. I WILL POINT OUT THE RISKS TO
ALGERIAN INTERESTS OF PURSUING A MILITANT COURSE OR OF
ANY STEPS TO INTERNATIONALIZE THE DISPUTE. I WILL ALSO
MAKE CLEAR THAT WE WANT FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH ALGERIA,
BUT NOT AT THE EXPENSE OF OUR OLD FRIENDSHIP WITH YOUR
MAJESTY.

-- MY REASON FOR SEEKING THIS AUDIENCE WITH YOU IS TO
ACQUAINT YOU WITH OUR CONCERNS AND TO REQUEST YOUR

ASSESSMENT OF THE SITUATION.

-- WE ARE HEARTENED BY YOUR OWN AND PRESIDENT BOUMEDIENE'S
RECENT DECLARATIONS THAT NEITHER OF YOUR COUNTRIES WILL
DELIBERATELY INITIATE HOSTILITIES OVER THE SAHARA QUESTION.
HOWEVER, SO LONG AS THE MILITARY BUILD-UP CONTINUES ON
SECRET

PAGE 06 STATE 041810 TOSEC 040167

BOTH SIDES AND SO LONG AS GUERRILLA WARFARE PERSISTS,
THERE IS A REAL DANGER THAT AN UNPLANNED INCIDENT COULD
TOUCH OFF GENERALIZED HOSTILITIES. SUCH A CONFLICT WOULD
CAUSE GREAT SUFFERING FOR THE PEOPLES OF THE AREA AND
WOULD DIVERT PRECIOUS RESOURCES FROM YOUR RESPECTIVE
COUNTRY'S DEVELOPMENT NEEDS.

-- A PROLONGED CONFRONTATION, ENCOMPASSING GUERRILLA
ACTIVITIES AND COUNTERMEASURES, SUBVERSION TACTICS, AND
THE INJECTION OF OUTSIDE ELEMENTS COULD HAVE EQUALLY
INJURIOUS HUMAN AND ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES, AND COULD
UNDERMIND THE EXISTING BALANCE OF POWER IN NORTH AFRICA.

-- WE KNOW FROM MR. KARIM LAMRANI'S RECENT CONVERSATION
WITH SECRETARY KISSINGER THAT YOU ARE FULLY AWARE OF THE
STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS OF THIS SITUATION. OF PARTICULAR
CONCERN IS THE POSSIBILITY THAT ALGERIA, FRUSTRATED IN
ITS CALL FOR A REFERENDUM, MAY INTERNATIONALIZE THE
PROBLEM BY TURNING TO THE SOVIET UNION, CUBA, NORTH
VIETNAM FOR MORAL AND MATERIAL ASSISTANCE.

-- IT IS OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE THAT WE NOT LET THIS BECOME
AN ARENA FOR EAST-WEST POWER POLITICS.

-- WE ALSO VIEW WITH GRAVITY SIGNS THAT BOUMEDIENE MAY BE
THINKING OF ABANDONING HIS TACIT SUPPORT FOR A NEGOTIATED
MID-EAST SETTLEMENT AND OF MOVING INTO THE RADICAL ARAB
CAMP AS A RESPONSE TO WHAT HE PROBABLY CONSIDERS TO BE A
POLITICAL DEFEAT IN THE SAHARA. THE GROWING RAPPROCHEMENT
BETWEEN ALGERIA AND LIBYA IS ONE DISTURBING INDICATION OF
THIS.

-- IF THIS PROBLEM IS NOT SETTLED BY NEGOTIATION IN A
MANNER WHICH IS AT LEAST PARTIALLY RESPONSIVE TO THE
SENSITIVITIES OF ALL CONCERNED AND INTERESTED PARTIES,
WE FEAR EVENTS WILL MOVE IN THE DIRECTION I HAVE JUST
DESCRIBED.

-- WE HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE THAT PRESIDENT BOUMEDIENE,
PERHAPS BECAUSE HE HAS NOT RECEIVED THE BACKING HE

PROBABLY EXPECTED FROM MOST ARAB AND MANY AFRICAN
SECRET

PAGE 07 STATE 041810 TOSEC 040167

COUNTRIES, MAY NOW BE SEEKING A WAY OUT OF THE IMPASSE.

ALTHOUGH ALGERIAN PUBLIC STATEMENTS ON SELF-DETERMINATION THROUGH REFERENDUM APPEAR TO LEAVE LITTLE ROOM FOR COM-PROMISE, WE DO WONDER WHETHER THE VARIOUS ALTERNATIVES HAVE BEEN FULLY EXPLORED.

-- WE ARE, OF COURSE, FULLY AWARE OF YOUR GOVERNMENT'S VIEWS ON THE QUESTION OF A REFERENDUM. HOWEVER, HAS THOUGHT BEEN GIVEN TO WORKING OUT SOME FORMULA WHICH WOULD BE RESPONSIVE TO THE INTENT OF BOTH UN RESOLUTIONS THAT THE WISHES OF THE SAHARAN PEOPLE BE FREELY EXPRESSED IN THE PRESENCE OF A UN OBSERVER, BUT WHICH WOULD PROTECT MOROCCO'S VITAL INTERESTS AS WELL? YOUR MAJESTY SAID WHEN I SAW YOU IN SEPTEMBER THAT EFFORTS WOULD BE MADE TO FIND "AN ELEGANT SOLUTION" ON THE POLITICAL SIDE.

-- THE PRINCIPLE OF SELF-DETERMINATION HAS WIDE POPULAR APPEAL AND ALGERIA WILL SURELY EXPLOIT THIS FACTOR TO THE UTMOST. U.S. PUBLIC ATTENTION IS BEGINNING TO FOCUS ON THIS ASPECT OF THE SAHARA PROBLEM JUDGING FROM RECENT INQUIRIES RECEIVED BY THE CONGRESS AND STATE DEPARTMENT.

-- AS SECRETARY KISSINGER INDICATED TO MR. LAMRANI, WE WANT TO BE HELPFUL TO MOROCCO, AND WE ARE SYMPATHETIC TO YOUR PROBLEM IN THE SAHARA. WE ARE MAKING EVERY EFFORT TO PROVIDE YOU WITH THE ARMS YOU FEEL YOU NEED AND TO FACILITATE THE TRANSFER OF ARMS FROM OTHER COUNTRIES. HOWEVER, CONTINUATION OF THIS POLICY DEPENDS ON THE WILL OF THE U.S. PUBLIC AND THE CONGRESS. IF MOROCCO SHOULD BE PORTRAYED IN THE MEDIA OR IN INTERNATIONAL FORA AS FAILING TO CARRY OUT THE SPIRIT AND INTENT OF THE UNGA RESOLUTIONS ON THE SAHARA (AND PARTICULARLY THE RESOLUTION FOR WHICH WE VOTED), WE BELIEVE THAT PUBLIC SENTIMENT MIGHT REACT UNFAVORABLY.

-- FOR THESE REASONS, I WOULD APPRECIATE ANYTHING YOUR MAJESTY CAN TELL ME ABOUT YOUR THOUGHTS ON HOW A FORMULA MAY BE WORKED OUT WHICH WILL BE RESPONSIVE TO THE INTENT OF BOTH UN RESOLUTIONS.

SECRET

PAGE 08 STATE 041810 TOSEC 040167

4. RECOMMENDATIONS:

A. THAT YOU APPROVE THE TALKING POINTS FOR BOUMEDIENE.

APPROVE----- DISAPPROVE-----

B. THAT YOU APPROVE THE TALKING POINTS FOR HASSAN.

APPROVE----- DISAPPROVE-----

5. DRAFTED: NEA/AFN:WWEISLOGEL/GJAMESON

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